

Appl. No. 10/828,861
Amdt. dated March 13, 2006
Reply to Office action of December 21, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 3-14, and 16-18 remain in this application. Claims 2 and 15 have been canceled. Claims 19 and 20 have been withdrawn.

Claims 19 and 20 have been withdrawn as the result of an earlier restriction requirement.

In view of the examiner's earlier restriction requirement, applicant retains the right to present claims 19 and 20 in a divisional application.

Claim 1, as amended, overcomes the 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejection because it has been amended to include the invention having a pair of padlocks, each padlock attached to the aperture of each locking pin. Support for the amendment to specify that the invention has a pair of padlocks, each padlock attached to the aperture of each locking pin is found in the Specification at p. 6, lines 26-27, p. 7, lines 29-30, p. 9, lines 10 and 13, and in Figs. 1 and 2. The cited and relied upon Talbot (6,435,801) discloses a gin pole cotter pin 108 (column 4, lines 37-39 and Figure 7). The cited and relied upon Skarp (5,873,552) discloses a locking loop 62 (column 3, line 60, and Figure 1). Both a cotter pin (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cotter_pin) and a locking loop are easily removed by unauthorized users. Use of such methods to secure the locking pins of the current invention would leave the mailbox and/or portions of the mailbox support structure vulnerable to theft or vandalism. Given that mailboxes are a common target for pranks, use of a padlock (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Padlock>) to prevent unauthorized users from removing locking pins of the current invention is a far better solution than that offered by the prior art. The dependent claims 3-13 add additional novel features to the independent claims recited above and thus are submitted to be a-fortiori, patentable.

Claim 14, as amended, overcomes the 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejection because it has been amended to include the invention having a pair of padlocks, each padlock attached

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to the aperture of each locking pin. Support for the amendment to specify that the invention has a pair of padlocks, each padlock attached to the aperture of each locking pin is found in the Specification at p. 6, lines 26-27, p. 7, lines 29-30, p. 9, lines 10 and 13, and in Figs. 1 and 2. The cited and relied upon Talbot (6,435,801) discloses a gin pole cotter pin 108 (column 4, lines 37-39 and Figure 7). The cited and relied upon Skarp (5,873,552) discloses a locking loop 62 (column 3, line 60, and Figure 1). Both a cotter pin (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cotter_pin) and a locking loop are easily removed by unauthorized users. Use of such methods to secure the locking pins of the current invention would leave the mailbox and/or portions of the mailbox support structure vulnerable to theft or vandalism. Given that mailboxes are a common target for pranks, use of a padlock (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Padlock>) to prevent unauthorized users from removing locking pins of the current invention is a far better solution than that offered by the prior art. The dependent claims 16-18 add additional novel features to the independent claims recited above and thus are submitted to be a-fortiori, patentable.

The dependent claims 3-13 and 16-18 add additional novel features to the independent claims recited above and thus are submitted to be a-fortiori, patentable.

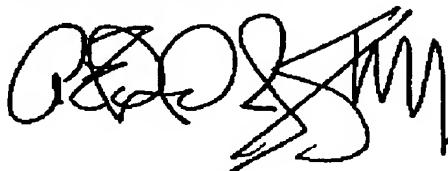
In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that:

Claims 1, 3-14, and 16-18, as amended, recite distinctions that are of patentable merit under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) for the independent claims and thus for each dependent claim as well. Specifically, a pair of padlocks, each padlock attached to the aperture of each locking pin was unsuggested among the prior art references.

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Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,



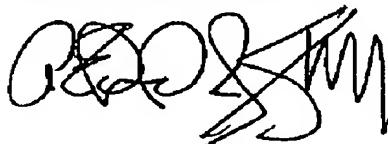
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Date: March 13, 2006

Certificate of Facsimile

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted by fax to the United States Patent and Trademark Office, Fax No. 571-273-8300 on the date shown below.

Anthony Edw. J Campbell



Monday, March 13, 2006